Akathist to Saint Samson the Righteous Judge of the House of Israel

feastday April 8 and the Sunday of the Forefathers

NOTE: The first person to canonize Samson the Judge as a Saint is Saint Apostle Paul! In his Epistle to Hebrews, chapter 11:

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of

lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." (KJV)

Kontakion 1

To thee, O Samson, chosen from the womb and set apart by the angel's voice, we cry aloud in wonder: thou wast a living sign of God's mercy upon barren Israel. As the Spirit rushed upon thee in the camp of Dan, so rush upon us now, that with strength divine we may sing:
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Ikos 1

Behold, the people of Israel languished under Philistine yoke, yet the Lord looked upon Manoah's wife and said, "Thou shalt conceive and bear a son." Therefore we marvel and proclaim:
Rejoice, fruit of a sterile womb made fertile by grace!
Rejoice, vow of the Nazirite sealed before thy birth!
Rejoice, razor that never touched thy head, type of unbroken obedience!
Rejoice, locks of power flowing like the seven streams of Eden!
Rejoice, for the angel ascended in the flame of the altar!
Rejoice, for thy mother was commanded to drink no wine nor strong drink!
Rejoice, thou who didst begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 2

Seeing the young lion roaring against thee in the vineyards

of Timnah, the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon thee, and thou didst rend it as one tears a kid. From its carcass flowed honey, and thou didst feed thy parents, yet hid the riddle in thy heart. Wherefore we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 2

At the wedding feast in Timnah thou didst speak a riddle born of divine wonder: “Out of the eater came something to eat; out of the strong came something sweet.” When the men of the city threatened thy bride, she wept before thee until the seventh day. Thus we honour thy patience and cry:
Rejoice, thou who didst slay the lion with naked hands!
Rejoice, thou who didst turn death into sweetness!
Rejoice, riddle of providence veiled in honey!
Rejoice, for thirty companions received linen garments and festal robes!
Rejoice, thou who didst ascend to Ashkelon and smote thirty Philistines!
Rejoice, fire of righteous wrath kindled by the Spirit!
Rejoice, for thy father-in-law gave thy wife to another!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 3

When thy anger was hot against the Philistines, thou didst catch three hundred foxes, turned tail to tail, and put firebrands between them. The blazing fields of standing grain, vineyards, and olive groves bore witness to thy vengeance. Beholding this, we cry: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

The men of Judah bound thee with two new ropes to deliver thee to the Philistines, yet at Lehi the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon thee, and the ropes became as flax touched by fire. With the jawbone of an ass thou didst slay

a thousand men. Therefore we extol thee:
Rejoice, thou who didst turn captivity into victory!
Rejoice, thou who didst make the jawbone a sceptre of judgment!
Rejoice, heap upon heap—Ramath-lehi, the lifting up of the jawbone!
Rejoice, for the Philistines fell as stubble before the flame!
Rejoice, thou who didst cry, “With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps!”
Rejoice, for God clave the hollow place and water flowed—En-hakkore, the spring of the crier!
Rejoice, thou who didst judge Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 4

In the valley of Sorek thou didst love a woman named Delilah, and the lords of the Philistines promised her eleven hundred pieces of silver to entice thee. Three times thou didst deceive her, yet on the fourth thy soul was vexed to death. Wherefore, grieving, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

“Tell me wherein thy great strength lieth,” she pressed, and thou didst say, “If I be bound with seven fresh bowstrings…” Again, “with new ropes…” Again, “if thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web…” But love betrayed thee, and thou didst reveal all. Thus we lament and praise:
Rejoice, thou whose strength was not in bowstrings nor ropes!
Rejoice, thou whose locks were woven with the pin of the loom!
Rejoice, for the Philistines shouted, “The gods have delivered Samson into our hand!”

Rejoice, thou whose eyes were put out and brought down to Gaza in fetters of bronze!
Rejoice, grinder in the prison house, type of humbled pride!
Rejoice, for thy hair began to grow again after it was shaven!
Rejoice, hidden mercy of God in the midst of judgment!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 5

On the day of the great sacrifice to Dagon, the Philistines brought thee out to make sport before three thousand men and women upon the roof. Between the pillars thou didst pray, “O Lord God, remember me and strengthen me only this once.” Wherefore, dying, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

“Let me die with the Philistines,” thou didst cry, and bowing thyself with all thy might, the house fell upon the lords and all the people. Thou slewest more at thy death than in thy life. Therefore we magnify thee:
Rejoice, thou who didst pull down the temple of Dagon!
Rejoice, thou who didst crush the serpent’s head with thy fall!
Rejoice, for the middle pillars bore up the house of idolatry!
Rejoice, for the roof crashed upon princes, lords, and people!
Rejoice, type of Christ who destroyed death by death!
Rejoice, for thy brethren came and buried thee in the tomb of Manoah thy father!
Rejoice, thou who didst judge Israel twenty years and rest in peace!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 6

O Samson, mighty in weakness, thou wast a parable of fallen man restored by grace. Though thou didst stumble, yet in thy final prayer thou wast heard. Teach us to cry with compunction: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

As the angel foretold, thou didst begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines, yet thy life was a mirror of human frailty. Wherefore we flee to thy intercession, crying:
Rejoice, thou who teachest us vigilance over the Nazirite vow of the soul!
Rejoice, thou who showest that strength is made perfect in weakness!
Rejoice, for the Spirit departs when the vow is broken!
Rejoice, for the Spirit returns when the hair grows in repentance!
Rejoice, thou who didst slay a lion—foreshadowing Christ's victory over the roaring one!
Rejoice, thou who didst carry the gates of Gaza to the hill—type of Christ bearing the gates of Hades!
Rejoice, thou who didst die between the pillars—icon of the Cross between two thieves!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 7

Strange and awesome was thy birth, announced by fire and flame; stranger still thy death, crushing the house of the enemy. In both we see the hand of God, and sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

From the barren womb to the prison mill, from the jawbone to the pillars of Dagon, thy path was marked by wonders.

Therefore we sinners fall before thee:
Rejoice, thou who wast set apart before thou wast born!
Rejoice, thou who didst drink from the hollow place in Lehi!
Rejoice, thou who didst carry the gates of Gaza upon thy shoulders!
Rejoice, thou who didst grind in blindness yet saw God in prayer!
Rejoice, thou whose final act shook the foundations of idolatry!
Rejoice, thou whose burial was between Zorah and Eshtaol—sign of peace after strife!
Rejoice, thou who art numbered among the judges and heroes of faith!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 8

All the host of heaven marvelled when the temple fell and Dagon lay headless before the ark in times past—now again when thou, a single man, didst overthrow a multitude. Wherefore we join the angels and sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

O Samson, thou wast a flame of zeal in a darkened age. Though thou didst fall, thou didst rise in prayer. Be thou our advocate before the throne of grace:
Rejoice, thou who teachest us to guard the senses!
Rejoice, thou who showest the peril of unholy alliances!
Rejoice, thou who didst turn sport into judgment!
Rejoice, thou who didst make the house of laughter a tomb!
Rejoice, thou whose death was thy greatest victory!
Rejoice, thou who art a sign of resurrection hope!
Rejoice, thou who prayest for us who are bound by sin!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 9

To save a sinful people, the Lord raised thee up as a judge and deliverer. Though thy life was storm-tossed, thy end was crowned with glory. Wherefore we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 9

As Manoah prayed, “Let the man of God come again,” so we pray: let thy strength, O Samson, support us in the hour of temptation:
Rejoice, thou who didst begin and end with the Spirit of the Lord!
Rejoice, thou who didst carry the gates by night—type of Christ harrowing hell!
Rejoice, thou who didst slay a thousand with the weapon of humility!
Rejoice, thou whose blindness opened the eyes of faith!
Rejoice, thou who didst die that others might live in freedom!
Rejoice, thou whose tomb is a place of quiet after battle!
Rejoice, thou who art remembered when Israel cries unto God!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 10

No hymn can contain the mystery of thy life, O Samson, for in thee we see both the frailty of Adam and the power of the Spirit. Wherefore we fall silent and sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 10

From the lion to the pillars, from Timnah to Gaza, thy deeds proclaim the hidden ways of God. Therefore we cry:
Rejoice, thou who wast a Nazirite yet loved a Philistine woman!
Rejoice, thou who didst weave a riddle from a carcass!
Rejoice, thou who didst set fire to the tails of foxes!

Rejoice, thou who didst drink water from the jawbone's hollow!
Rejoice, thou who didst carry the gates to the mountain before Hebron!
Rejoice, thou who didst bow with all thy might between the pillars!
Rejoice, thou who art a parable of grace abounding over sin!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 11

O holy Samson, as thou didst pray in thy blindness, "Strengthen me only this once," so pray for us who are blinded by passions. Grant us tears of repentance, that with thee we may sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 11

In the book of Judges thou art written as one who began to deliver Israel. Complete thy work in us, O judge of old:
Rejoice, thou who teachest us to number our days!
Rejoice, thou who showest the folly of trusting in human strength!
Rejoice, thou whose hair grew again—sign of returning grace!
Rejoice, thou who didst make the house fall on the lords and on all the people!
Rejoice, thou whose death was more glorious than thy life!
Rejoice, thou who art a forerunner of the Stronger than the strong man!
Rejoice, thou who intercedest for the weak and fallen!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 12

Grace and truth shone through thy flawed life, O Samson. Thou didst sin, yet repentedst; thou didst fall, yet wast

raised. Wherefore, we sing the mercy of God revealed in thee: Alleluia!

Ikos 12

Singing thy contest and thy victory, we fall down before the Lord who worketh mightily in the weak, and we cry to thee:
Rejoice, O Samson, last of the Judges!
Rejoice, first of the restored in spirit!
Rejoice, thou who didst begin the breaking of Philistine power!
Rejoice, thou who didst end in sacrificial glory!
Rejoice, thou whose story warneth and encourageth!
Rejoice, thou who prayest for us at the right hand of the Father!
Rejoice, O mighty deliverer of Israel, strength of God incarnate in human frailty!
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Kontakion 13 (repeated thrice)

O most glorious Samson, Nazirite of God, who didst rend the lion, carry the gates, and pull down the temple of Dagon: accept this hymn of thy servants, and by thy prayers break the bonds of our sins, that with thee we may ever sing to God: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!(Then repeat Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1)

Ikos 1

Behold, the people of Israel languished under Philistine yoke, yet the Lord looked upon Manoah’s wife and said, “Thou shalt conceive and bear a son.” Therefore we marvel and proclaim:
Rejoice, fruit of a sterile womb made fertile by grace!
Rejoice, vow of the Nazirite sealed before thy birth!

Rejoice, razor that never touched thy head, type of unbroken obedience!
Rejoice, locks of power flowing like the seven streams of Eden!
Rejoice, for the angel ascended in the flame of the altar!
Rejoice, for thy mother was commanded to drink no wine nor strong drink!
Rejoice, thou who didst begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines!
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Kontakion 1

To thee, O Samson, chosen from the womb and set apart by the angel's voice, we cry aloud in wonder: thou wast a living sign of God's mercy upon barren Israel. As the Spirit rushed upon thee in the camp of Dan, so rush upon us now, that with strength divine we may sing:
Rejoice, Samson, Nazirite of God and breaker of bonds!

Prayer to the Holy Judge Samson

O Samson, chosen of God and mighty in battle, who from thy youth wast set apart by the angel's word and filled with the Spirit of the Lord: thou didst rend the lion, smite the Philistines with the jawbone, carry the gates of Gaza, and in thy final hour pull down the house of Dagon upon the enemy. Though thou didst fall into temptation, yet in repentance thou wast heard, and thy death became victory. Pray for us, O holy one, who are entangled in the snares of the flesh and the wiles of the adversary. Strengthen the weak, enlighten the blind, and break the fetters of sin that bind us. Teach us to guard the Nazirite vow of our baptism, that neither wine of worldly pleasure nor razor of compromise touch the consecration of our souls. As thou didst cry out in the prison house and wast

remembered, so remember us when we cry from the mill of affliction. And at the end, when we stand between the pillars of death and life, grant that we may bow with all our might toward the Kingdom, pulling down every idol and entering with thee into the rest of the saints. For thine is the intercession towards the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.